



ARIZONA MILITARY AIRPORTS REGIONAL COMPATIBILITY PROJECT

WESTERN MARICOPA COUNTY/LUKE AIR FORCE BASE

Project Update #4, September 6, 2002

The Western Maricopa County/Luke Air Force Base (AFB) component of the Regional Compatibility Project is an effort to identify permanent resolutions to land use compatibility issues around Luke AFB through collaborative effort and strong implementation. This update is one of a series that will be distributed throughout the project to keep stakeholders and other interested parties up-to-date on the effort's progress.

WEST VALLEY & LUKE REGIONAL LAND USE OPEN HOUSE

THE OPEN HOUSE IS NEXT SATURDAY! Come join us at the West Valley & Luke Regional Land Use Open House on Saturday, September 14 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Wigwam Resort in Litchfield Park, Arizona.

The Open House is a collaborative environment where attendees are encouraged to be active participants. Project information will be provided; key issues such as airspace, noise, and safety will be discussed; and ideas for solutions will be generated. Input from the Open House will be critical as implementation strategies are developed. Please pass this information on to others who you think would be interested in attending this event. A special area will be provided for children attending the Open House. Complementary refreshments will be sponsored by Sky Harbor Airport and Fighter Country Partnership.

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Since the last bulletin, a project update was provided to the Fighter Country Coalition, and a session at the League of Arizona Cities and Towns was devoted to discussing issues related to Arizona's military industry, including a presentation on this project. A key stakeholder meeting occurred among project team members and representatives from West Valley school districts to identify issues specific to schools. This discussion highlighted continued support for Luke's mission by schools and acknowledged that all parties would benefit from increased communication and clearer guidelines for school siting within the legislatively-defined territory in the vicinity of an active military airport, often referred to as "the box."

IMPROVING COORDINATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

A recurring point of discussion throughout stakeholder meetings has been the need to improve communication between the jurisdictions and Luke AFB during the development application process. A meeting was convened on August 23 among the project team and Community Development and Planning Directors from West Valley communities. The purpose of the meeting was to generate ideas for a process to ensure coordination on development applications that affect land within "the box."

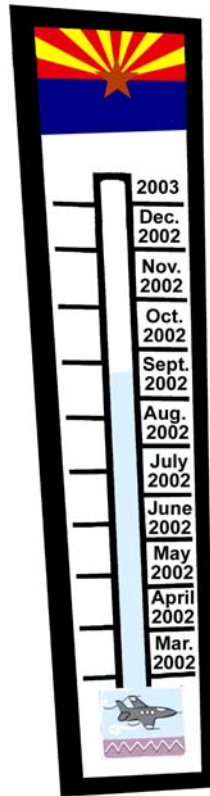
Brainstorming at the August 23 meeting indicated that successful strategies to consider for an improved process may include: 1) the institutionalization of early (pre-application stage) and informal communication, 2) the establishment of criteria by Luke AFB to provide a basic set of expectations on areas and uses of concern within the box, and 3) continuing education for staff, elected and appointed officials on the legislation and process affecting land development in "the box."

A proposed process will continue to be detailed and revised by the meeting participants and the project team. The proposal will then be discussed with other parties involved in the development process – primarily developers– and ultimately presented to elected officials and base command.

LAND USE ANALYSIS AND MAPPING

Land use in the West Valley is a key component in the Compatibility Project. In order to assess the current and planned land uses in the area around Luke AFB, the project team has met with representatives of Luke AFB and the West Valley jurisdictions, discussed their critical land use issues, and collected general and comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, environmental assessments and other technical documents for analysis. The team has worked closely with the County and with the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) in collecting land use information and population data from their extensive Geographic Information Systems and other files for our land use mapping effort. The Land Use Group has analyzed other, less traditional sources of information concerning land use in the West Valley. One example is our analysis of area newspapers over the past year to determine the land use issues identified by the public concerning Luke AFB and urban development in the Valley.

PROJECT PROGRESS



Final Document

Draft Plan Document

Draft Alternatives & Implementation Strategies

West Valley & Luke Regional Land Use Open House

Data Collection & Issue Identification

Over the next month continuing tasks will include the development of alternatives for evaluation, filling identified data gaps, validating information, and continued collaboration with stakeholders.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EFFORT

To find information, provide feedback, or ask questions, please visit the project web site via www.azcommerce.com, or contact Deb Sydenham, AICP, Director, Community Planning Office, Arizona Department of Commerce at (602)280-8114 or debs@azcommerce.com.